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Culture of peace

Note verbale dated 31 July 2014 from the Permanent Mission of Bahrain to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Bahrain to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Office of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, and has the honour to enclose herewith the Bahrain Declaration "Civilizations in the Service of Humanity", adopted at the fourteenth Conference on All Civilizations in the Service of Humanity, held on 7 May 2014 in Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain (see annex).

The Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Bahrain to the United Nations requests that the enclosed text be issued as a document of the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 15.

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Please recycle

Annex to the note verbale dated 31 July 2014 from the Permanent Mission of Bahrain to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Arabic]

Bahrain Declaration

Civilizations in the Service of Humanity

The participants in the Civilizations in the Service of Humanity conference, including international organizations, political figures, religious leaders, thinkers and representatives of many religions, beliefs, sects and groups throughout the world, meeting in Manama, the capital of Bahrain, from 5 to 7 May 2014 in response to the gracious invitation of His Majesty King Hamad bin Issa Al Khalifa of Bahrain, and his wise initiative to build an alliance of civilizations that can rally humanity around a set of common values and confront fanaticism, hatred, extremism and terrorism, so that the world can continue to build balanced human relations that are fundamentally based on the human being not only as an individual and a value, but also as a member of a country, a nation and the world,

Having heard the working papers presented and discussed at length the issues raised therein, and having also considered the suggestions made, all of which support dialogue in order to build an alliance of civilizations that can bring about coexistence between all human beings, in all their diversity, the multitude of their cultures and their intellectual, religious and spiritual choices,

Recalling all previous efforts made and initiatives launched by individuals and institutions aimed at instilling a culture of coexistence, mutual respect and tolerance that is based on understanding and rapprochement among individuals, cultures, religions and civilizations, in order to promote the values of justice and peace, while respecting the rule of law and with due regard for United Nations instruments, which serve as terms of reference and a comprehensive framework for international relations,

Expressing their appreciation in particular for the efforts made by the United Nations, acting through its various structures and forums, to promote an alliance of civilizations that serves humanity and promotes a culture of dialogue, communication, understanding and openness between the followers of a multitude of religions, cultures and civilizations,

Declare the following:

All people, regardless of their colour, ethnic background, language and intellectual, cultural, religious and spiritual affiliation, are united by their common humanity;

The unity of humanity is founded on and built through dialogue that takes into account human diversity, differences and multiplicity, and is aimed at achieving peace, security, justice, development, equality, freedom and democracy;

Encouraging a culture of dialogue and mutual understanding by all available means is the essence of the alliance of civilizations to which we aspire;

All forms of hate speech are contrary to human rights, civility and civilization, and arise from a relationship with the other in which ignorance of the other is

transformed into hatred, and can only lead to exclusion and discrimination, incitement to intolerance, extremism and terrorism, and isolation instead of dialogue, violence instead of peace and animosity instead of cooperation and alliance;

The political exploitation of religions and civilizations through the entrenchment of factional, violent and intolerant beliefs disrupts the dialogue required to achieve solidarity between civilizations under the banner of common values, and paves the way for interference in the internal affairs of communities and sovereign states and the retardation of development, and cuts off the natural political development of communities by firmly establishing inflexibility, aggressiveness and political quotas rather than the logic of tolerance, cooperation and common allegiance to the country;

Cultural, educational, and media policies, in all their legitimate forms, should promote moderation in religious beliefs, foster a culture of coexistence while ensuring respect for the integrity of nations and strengthen human relations in view of the dignity that God has bestowed on all human beings;

Human rights, as the legal and moral framework for relations among nations and peoples, cannot be fully exercised unless there are unified standards concerning their practical application among all civilizations;

In consideration of the lofty nature of those goals and in order to ensure their achievement, national and local policies throughout the world, whether educational, cultural and development programmes that are based on human rights and take into account mutual respect between nations and peoples, or legislative systems and general development policies, should be in harmony with the goals of dialogue among civilizations in the service humanity, including, in particular, the principles of human worth and dignity, regardless of an individual's colour, race, language, belief or sex, while taking into account the need to respect religions and ensure that they are not distorted or viewed derisively or with contempt; individual freedom of belief and the right to worship, which are civil liberties; and the principles of human rapprochement, acceptance of the other, coexistence, mutual respect and equality in the context of the spirit of citizenship and the rule of law;

The conference stresses the importance of supporting the efforts of the United Nations and various regional organizations to inculcate the value of dialogue of civilizations, inasmuch as such dialogue benefits humanity and is an indispensable element of coexistence in our world, and it encourages states and civil society organizations working in development, in its comprehensive sense, to take into account, when carrying out their work, the International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures 2013-2022 and its related programme of action, which was developed within the framework of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, as well as the relevant plans and programmes that were adopted by the Alliance of Civilizations Forum and relevant regional organizations;

The conference participants urge the international community, United Nations organizations, international and regional institutions and the relevant civil society institutions to take these recommendations into account, in order to give effect to the principle of civilizations in the service of humanity.